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LETTER DATED 28 MAY 1991 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the Joint Declaration signed by the Government of Angola and the Government of Cuba concerning the completion, on 25 May 1991, of the schedule for the return of the contingent of Cuban internationalist troops.

I should be grateful if you would make the necessary arrangements for this letter and its annex to be issued and circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ricardo ALARCON de QUESADA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Cuba to the United Nations

Annex

Joint Declaration by the Government of Cuba and the Government of Angola concerning the completion of the schedule for the return of the contingent of Cuban internationalist troops

The Government of the Republic of Cuba and the Government of the People's Republic of Angola have examined the implementation of the Bilateral Agreement signed in New York on 22 December 1988, which established a 27-month schedule for the phased withdrawal of the contingent of Cuban internationalist troops, then numbering 50,000.

The Government of Angola and the Government of Cuba are proud that they have both complied strictly with the provisions regarding deadlines and numbers set forth in the approved schedule, implementation of which has been supervised by the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), established for that purpose at the request of Angola and Cuba as a pledge of their good faith.

Even before the actual schedule was under way, 3,000 combatants were repatriated between January and April 1989, as a goodwill gesture. The first phase of the withdrawal took place between April and October 1989; 50.3 per cent of the troops, or 25,181 combatants, were repatriated at a rate of over 3,600 a month.

The second phase, which was supposed to end on 30 March 1990, ended one month late, because of unwarranted actions by UNITA against Cuban troops. By April 1990, 33,048 troops, or 66 per cent of the total, had been withdrawn.

By September 1990, the third phase had been completed: 38,000 internationalists, or 76 per cent of the contingent, had returned to Cuba by that date. By the middle of the present month, part of the fourth phase had been completed, with the return of a total of 47,090 troops.

Through a complex and costly operation, 94 per cent of the internationalist combatants had returned by 15 May. At the same time, armaments and technical combat equipment belonging to the Revolutionary Armed Forces have been returned to Cuba.

The Government of Angola and the Government of Cuba, with the sole collaboration of the Government of the Soviet Union, and without any other form of international cooperation or assistance, have tackled this immense economic and logistical task so as to honour their commitments and to contribute, following the withdrawal of South African troops from Angolan territory, to the consolidation of the independence of the People's Republic of Angola, and to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) concerning the independence of Namibia and peace and security in south-western Africa.

Under the terms of the Bilateral Agreement, the schedule is supposed to be completed by 30 June 1991. Nevertheless, the Government of the People's Republic of Angola and the Government of the Republic of Cuba, taking into account the new situation resulting from the independence of Namibia and the climate created by the initial results of the negotiations between the legitimate Government of the People's Republic of Angola and UNITA, and with the aim of making a constructive gesture of peace and demonstrating confidence that the normalization of the internal situation is irreversible, have decided to bring forward the conclusion of the schedule and complete, by 25 May, the repatriation of the 1,910 Cuban internationalist troops still in the People's Republic of Angola.

On that date, the Government of the People's Republic of Angola and the Government of the Republic of Cuba will have honoured in exemplary fashion, 36 days before the deadline, the bilateral commitment which they undertook before the United Nations and the international community.

Angola and Cuba have given formal notice of this decision to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to all the parties involved in the New York Agreements of December 1988, in the hope that this gesture will help to put an end to all foreign interference, consolidate stability, further the national reconstruction of the People's Republic of Angola, and promote a climate of peace, mutual respect and collaboration in southern Africa.

Issued simultaneously at Havana and Luanda on 23 May 1991.